

King County Superior Court

COURTROOM RULES OF CONDUCT FOR COUNSEL AND PARTIES PRO SE

Judge Michael R. Scott

A. General

1. Be on time.
2. Make your objections briefly and on legal grounds (no testifying objections or speeches).
3. Stand to object or address the Court.
4. Do not make remarks directed at an opposing party or counsel.
5. Do not respond to opposing counsel's objection, unless asked by the Court to do so.
6. Do not argue with the Court.
7. Do not talk at the same time as the Court, opposing counsel, or a witness. The equipment can only accurately and concisely record one voice at a time.
8. Do not use racist, sexist, homophobic, obscene, or profane language in court (unless, of course, eliciting or quoting from the facts of the case).
9. No food or chewing gum is allowed in the courtroom.
10. Turn off all electronic devices that emit sounds, such as cell phones and alarms.

B. Voir Dire

1. The purpose of voir dire, indeed the purpose of the entire jury selection process, is to empanel a jury that is impartial and unbiased. Do not attempt to ingratiate yourself with jurors by telling personal anecdotes, establishing mutual friendships or acquaintances, or in any other manner.
2. Do not argue your case or attempt to convince or sway the jury on voir dire.

C. Testimony

1. Have all exhibits marked and logged with the Clerk before trial begins, in accordance with pre-trial order.
2. Have your witnesses in the witness room and ready to testify when needed.
3. Address witnesses as "Mr.," "Mrs.," "Dr.," or "Ms." Etc. No first names, except for children. This includes your own clients.
4. Do not make editorial comments after a witness's answer.
5. Do not ask repetitive questions.
6. Limit bench conferences to only unavoidable circumstances. Jurors don't like them.
7. The Court must be notified in advance of any firearms in the courtroom, for evidentiary purposes or otherwise. Firearms must be secured and unloaded at all times. Never point firearms in the direction of witnesses, jurors, parties, counsel, or any other person in the courtroom.
8. Ask leave of the Court to approach a witness on the stand.
9. At the end of each court day, be prepared to advise the Court and opposing counsel the witnesses you plan on calling the following day.
10. All witnesses are to be provided with copies of any Orders on Motions in Limine prior to their testimony, and an explanation regarding those Orders and their limitations on testimony.

D. Argument

1. Stay in the record. If you don't have a basis in the record, you shouldn't be making the argument.
2. Similarly, be careful and accurate in your description of case law. The Court reads the cases.
3. Be concise and get to the point. The Court will have read everything you've submitted; please don't regurgitate your brief.